



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

ANNIVERSARY PUBLICATIONS.

SECOND ANNUAL FLOWER SERMON.

BY THE REVEREND MONTGOMERY SCHUYLER.

1st Kings, Chap. IV., 33d Verse (Part).

“And he spake of trees, from the cedar that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall.”

At the request and by the appointment of the Bishop of the diocese, I am the second under the provision of the will of the late Henry Shaw, to preach on the “Wisdom and Goodness of God, as shown in the growth of Flowers, Fruits and other products of the Vegetable Kingdom.” It may not be amiss in me, as it was my privilege to have been personally acquainted with the testator for many years, and as it is not probable that such a privilege has been accorded to others who may succeed me, to speak of him, in the character under which he is brought before us, by this special bequest.

Though not known by public profession as a Christian man, he was baptized in infancy in the English Church, and retained through life a deep reverence for her teaching, and devotion to her forms of worship. He was not a man indifferent to religion, or inimical to the great truths of a written revelation. The motto he left inscribed on his mausoleum, — “How manifold are Thy works, in wisdom hast Thou made them all, the earth is full of Thy riches,” joined with that other motto, in striking prominence in the Garden, “Glory to God in the Highest, on earth peace, good will to men,” — bespeak a reverence for the Bible indicative of marked religious feeling.

Since I was asked to preach this sermon, I have thought often, and earnestly of this unique provision of the will ;

have tried to form some probable conjecture of the mental phase of its author; and of the nature of the motives which may have prompted the thought. The will in its inception was of grand and noble birth; and in the variety and multitude of its provisions, must have occupied, not merely days and weeks, but months in its elaboration. It involves careful and comprehensive thought, to put in order and proper proportion the varied considerations to be embraced, in answering the demands of the present, and providing for the ever-increasing and ever-varying developments growing out of the passage of years, and in all probability of centuries. Here was a princely estate, and an exceptional field for the exercise of a public spirit, devoid of all selfishness, and looking forward to a kindly provision for the pure pleasure and harmless enjoyment of generations to come, and for the permanent protection of a science, second to none in interest and importance; and that too with a munificence and far-reaching wisdom, of which the history of this country has furnished no precedent.

How often, as he took his seat in his fairy-like Garden, with the flowers smiling all around him, yielding their grateful fragrance as incense for their loving culture—how often, must his thoughts have traveled onward to the time when another father would be there to look after his children. And how naturally then, would arise the wish to perpetuate himself in such case; and doubtless it was from such a wish, that the thoughts grew and took shape, which were afterward embodied in distinct clauses of his last will and testament. Was it not one of these little preachers, or it may be, a bright company of them blooming at his feet, that lifted his thoughts heavenward; chanting in his ears the praises of the High and Lofty One, inhabiting eternity, who yet beautifies His footstool by painting the petal of the lily and the rose, and covering the checkered surface of the earth with its carpet of emerald? It must have been a consonance of thought and feeling with such

aspirations, which led to the determination that the lessons of these mute preachers should not be lost: and hence, the provision, that an interpreter of these voices should not be wanting to illustrate and enforce what they were daily teaching. There was deep religious feeling at the bottom of this provision; not exhausting itself in simple introspection; but, embracing the Deity as well as humanity, seeking to promote the glory of God and the good of man, by reiterating through the centuries the lessons of the divine wisdom and goodness.

In the spring of 1874, Canon Kingsley, the enthusiastic botanist, as well as broad-minded, warm-hearted man, world-renowned for his literary labors and philanthropic efforts, visited our city; and it was my privilege to take him to the Garden and introduce him to its unassuming proprietor. At once there sprang up between them a sympathy in the cultured devotion to a favorite science, that made their brief intercourse a mutual delight. We visited the choice and extensive collection of exotics, and the Canon showed himself as familiar with their botanical names, as if they were the members of his own family, and discoursed as readily of their several habitats and distinguishing characteristics, as of old acquaintances. This quickly insured the full sympathy and confidence of his host, and there was no lack of topics of conversation between them, among the wonders of the vegetable world. "With the exception of the Kew Garden," (said Canon Kingsley,) "I have seen nothing in any part of the world, that compares with the rarity and variety of the collection here." And on our return to the city he remarked, that he was amazed that there had been so little recognition on the part of our people of the immense service done by Mr. Shaw to the cause of science, and apparently so little respect shown to him personally. And he warmly expressed his intention, upon his return to England, of securing in his behalf the honor of an appointment as a Fellow of the Royal Society. But he was not permitted to carry out his

generous purpose. His days were numbered. He returned to his home in August; on the 29th of the following November, preached his last sermon in Westminster Abbey; and in January, 1875, was laid to his rest; leaving the record of an eminently useful life, whose influence will be felt through the ages to come in the works of genius he has left behind.

It has been said that devotion to the memory of a mother's love, is akin to the reverential devotion to Deity itself. And such was the devotion of Henry Shaw to the mother who bore him. Well do I remember the kind invitation I received more than 30 years ago, to join him with a party of friends at a dinner in commemorating his mother's 81st birthday. Reticent as he naturally was, there were only slight allusions in passing words, to the occasion of the gathering, but every member of the company knew and felt in sympathy with what was passing in the mind and heart of their host. A still more touching instance of this devotion, is the incident which occurred on the day of his death. A few hours only before he bade a long adieu to the scenes of earth, when his mind was clear and his memory undimmed, he asked his faithful attendant, that she would bring his mother's prayer book, which he had cherished for years as a priceless treasure, and which was lying close at hand, and read to him the Psalter for the day.

His biographer, who has written in such choice English, without exaggeration, and in honest truth, the simple story of his life, referring to his mother, remarks as it were incidentally, "whom he most resembles in disposition." And again, "His naturally high temper" (which, by the way, his faithful attendant of nearly twenty-five years assured me she never saw exhibited) — "his naturally high temper was under such complete control that few ever suspected its existence." "In twenty-three years" (says Mr. Gurney, head gardener), "I never heard him speak a harsh or irritable word, no matter what went wrong;

and in such a place, and with so many men, things will go wrong occasionally; he was always pleasant and cheerful, making the best of what could not be helped." Nor did he live in and for the present alone. He used to say when planting Tower Grove Park, a task in which he delighted, that he did not expect to see these children reach their maturity, that "he was planting them for posterity." Nor, while doing this, was he in his unambitious nature, thinking of himself; nor did he realize that he was building for himself a name that would outlive the longest lives of these, his children.

In concluding these personal allusions, there is one significant fact to which I would point, as a marked witness to the religious sentiments of the late Henry Shaw. Unlike most men he did not shrink from having a reminder of his mortality ever before his eyes. He could not leave his house to take his accustomed seat amid the bright life of leafy shrubs and blooming flowers, without passing the spot he had chosen for his last resting-place. "If a man die, shall he live again," must have been a question, often appealing to his mind, in the routine of his daily walk; and when sketching the plan of his mausoleum, what prompted the thought to crown it with the emblem of our Salvation? There it stands and there it will stand, to preach the grand lesson of the Incarnation, and to remind the passerby of that noblest example of self-sacrifice, culminating in the saving efficacy of the atonement.

I know, brethren, you will pardon this long preface, though it must necessarily shorten a fuller consideration of the proper subject of the sermon.

It is said of Solomon in the text: "And he spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall."

The cedar of Lebanon was the king of the forest in the Holy Land; and there is reason to believe that some of these noble specimens of creative power, are still standing, which have breasted the storms of thirty centuries.

Of the "hyssop that springeth out of the wall," it is thought to have been a short-lived, insignificant herb, most probably a species of moss which grew upon the damp places of the wall, and was least likely to attract the notice of a casual observer, or enlist the attention of those who had not made a special study of the vegetable kingdom. By selecting the extremes of that kingdom, as fitting representatives of the discriminating and all-embracing knowledge of Solomon, with its multifarious and widely scattered members, the sacred historian has given us to understand, that as in other fields his remarkable wisdom had been displayed, so in this special branch of science were his investigations alike conspicuous.

That the wisdom of Solomon was widely extended, embracing every species of knowledge, having been, as we are taught, specially endowed by the All-Wise, is apparent from the context, "And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart." Wisdom has been defined "knowledge rightly used," and again "the pursuit of the best ends by the best means."

The context asserts that "he spake three thousand proverbs, and his songs were one thousand and five." In such of the proverbs as are extant we have examples embracing all the relations of life; eminently practical, as rules for the guidance of the statesman, the legislator, the teacher of morals and religion, or the private citizen in his domestic duties.

The age of Solomon was the golden age of the Kingdom of Israel. Under the warlike rule of his father David, that kingdom had rapidly gained the ascendancy over the neighboring powers. Their isolated position no longer held them aloof from intercourse with others, nor did it interfere with the liberal cultivation of the arts and sciences. The forty years of the peaceful reign of Solomon, especially during its early period, were devoted to the more general elevation of the people in the social scale; and to a more liberal education among all classes, the refining in-

fluences of which continued long after the barbaric wealth and wasteful superabundance begotten by their semi-enlightenment had passed away. That early in life, after his endowment with marvelous wisdom, Solomon's attention was directed to the study of the vegetable kingdom, is altogether probable.

The words of the text, critically examined, convey more than the idea, that trees and herbs were at times the topic of conversation. The better translation would be, "he treated of plants," extending his observation over external nature, involving the widest survey and the minutest discrimination. St. Irenæus, one of the earliest fathers of the Church, says: "Solomon expounded physiologically, the wisdom that is apparent in the creation." The Koran asserts that Solomon understood the language of birds; and there is a tradition, that many volumes now extant in the Turkish language are ascribed to him. But, Solomon was not the first student of this lovely page of external nature, wherein God's wisdom and goodness is so marvelously revealed. From the dawn of creation, at the close of the first day's work, there were wonders over which the "Sons of God shouted for joy." The Great Architect never called into being or shaped a creature of material mould, that did not challenge the strictest scrutiny of the highest intelligences. Doubtless, Adam and Eve in their innocency in the garden, must have found many an occasion for adoring wonder and many a stimulus to delightful converse in the mysterious putting forth of the plant, as its young life developed before their eyes. The love of flowers is a part of the æsthetic nature of every individual of the race. It is born in the heart of the humblest peasant, in the wild children of the forest, as well as in the homes of taste and cultivation. It is characteristic of "The Lord's Prayer," that it is adapted to all the varied circumstances of human life, and that there is no occasion when its words are not fitting, and its petitions becoming. So is it with the love and the presence of flowers everywhere. Can you imagine an occasion

where their presence would be resented? While naturally associated with every thing that is bright and joyous, decorating the font at baptism, the Altar at Easter, and wreathing the brow of the bride, yet are their fragrance and beauty alike welcome at the bedside of the sick, and on the grave of the departed. And are they not now here welcome in the House of God? As I have said, the love of flowers is natural to us all and there is something in their companionship, awakening the better impulses of our nature, and which must have been eminently consonant with the environment of our first parents—as they walked in the garden amid myriads of flowers smiling a glad welcome to their pure spirits. He who, as we are told, walked and talked with them there, and who is supposed to have been the Son of God in human form, anticipating His incarnation, in all probability discoursed of the wisdom and goodness of God, thus wondrously manifested in these beauteous specimens of His handiwork; for, many centuries afterward, while standing on the mountain side, preaching to their descendants, He pointed to the flowers blooming at their feet, and earnestly enjoined — “Consider the lilies of the field.”

Doubtless, this had formed the subject of many a discourse with these pure and gifted beings, whose souls, created in the image of God, were illuminated to take in the lessons which the adornments of Eden in their wonderful variety and beauty presented to their vision. And alas! when by transgression they had forfeited all right to such association and teaching, what a contrast, when they passed out into a cheerless world, where briars and thorns abounded.

Milton, in his poetic fervor, has thus given voice to the despondent Eve,

“Must I leave thee Paradise,
O Flowers,
That never will in other climates grow,
* * * which I bred up with tender hands,
From the first opening bud, and gave ye names,
Who now shall rear ye to the sun, or rank your tribes?”

In the imagination of the poet, it was our first mother, who gave names to the flowers, classified them in families, and ranked their tribes.

Having already quoted from the words of our Lord in His Sermon on the Mount, I cannot pass them without a few words of farther comment —

“Consider the lilies of the field how they grow.”

The meaning in the original is intense. I give it from the Lexicon — “*Consider*,” “*Note accurately*,” “*Learn thoroughly*.” “*How*,” “*in what manner*,” or in other words, by what law do they grow.

Here, the great teacher calls the special attention of his hearers to the hidden mystery of their life and growth. These flowers were not senseless forms of dead matter. They were living things. Life was associated with their being, and what was characteristic of life, the mystery of growth. It was not enough that His hearers should indulge their taste for the beautiful, by a hasty glance, without discrimination as to the characteristics of each separate plant. The lilies in the fields of Palestine, are described as growing in rich profusion, and with a vivid golden brilliancy in autumn, aptly suggesting the comparison of a fitting array, “with Solomon in all his glory.” But this was not with the Great Teacher the point of attraction. He calls them to “note accurately how they grow.” There was a hidden mystery in the growth of these living things, well deserving their careful study, and well fitted to illustrate the skill, wisdom, and goodness of Him, “who maketh the grass to grow upon the mountains.”

I could honestly, brethren, fairly interpreting to my own mind their meaning, make these words an authoritative text for commending the study of Botany. Nor do I know a branch of science which, to the devout student, is so full of startling and convincing demonstrations of the wisdom and goodness of the First Great Cause of All. I cannot conceive that a scientist in this branch of study can be an agnostic, when the marvelous wisdom of the Designer and

the exquisite skill of the Architect sparkle in every shrub that grows, and every flower that blooms.

Since the invention of the microscope, which only reaches back a little more than a century, there has been a marvelous advance in botanical investigations; developing wonders of which the older students never dreamed. In the structure of the plant; in its physiological organization; tracing the nature, position and adaptation of its several members, and the purposes they subserve; as these have been studied, ascertained and settled, there have been revelations of creative skill, and such evidences of beneficent arrangement, that no devout student can withhold the grateful confession — “How manifold are Thy works, in wisdom hast Thou made them all.” As without the aid of the telescope, the wonders of the heavenly bodies were but imperfectly revealed, and their intricate, unceasing, and never varying movements but partially apprehended; so, in the case of each individual plant, the naked eye could but imperfectly discern its several members; separate their constituent parts; follow their intricate connections, and diagnose the purposes they were designed to subserve: so it was not until the magnifying power of the microscope was brought to bear upon it, that many an organ was discovered and analyzed whose functions are all important to its life, and whose adaptation and workings, depending upon minute inspection, were hidden entirely from view.

There is one indisputable fact which stands out in bold relief as the outcome of the investigations of botanists of a comparatively late date; and that is the almost imperceptible boundary between the vegetable and animal kingdom. There is an analogy which admits of no contradiction, between the several members of different families in each kingdom; as to their comparative structure; the law of their physiology and the adaptation and offices of their respective organs. As an illustration of this truth, I desire to quote from an introductory address, of the late

Dr. Chas. A. Pope, delivered before a medical college in this city, A. D. 1855.

“Unity and simplicity characterize the works of the Creator.” Mark he does not say the works of nature, but “the works of the Creator,” he believed in a personal God. He proceeds: “They obtain alike in the vegetable and animal kingdom. The simple leaf by its morphological changes, constitutes the calyx, the petals, stamens, pistil, which having diverse forms and functions according to their position on the axis of the plant, may be compared to the homologous organs of animals; *i. e.*, an organ fundamentally the same, develops in one case as a leaf, in another as a petal, in another as a stamen, or pistil; just as the arm of a man, the foreleg of a quadruped, the wing of a bird, and the pectoral fin of a fish represent one and the same organ. In vegetable as in animal growth, one great thought underlies the whole structure. The thought has in it an element of infinity, but the mode of expression is necessarily finite. And what does it indicate, but that the same word which created the plant, is expressed in the plant.” God’s works are every where characterized by unity and simplicity; and His forming hand is as plainly visible in the structure of the simplest plant, in the careful provision for its organs of reproduction and their potential working, as in the glittering array of the starry heavens, or the movements of the myriad planets in their appointed orbs. The laws which govern the universe know no limitation of time or space; and are not measured by the boundaries which either the microscope or telescope can survey.

We often speak in our self-complacency of this world, as formed for the use and pleasure of man, and seem to take it for granted, when in its several stages, we are told the Creator pronounced it “very good,” that it was all for the sake of him who was to come forth in the last era, as the finished specimen of His handiwork.

Doubtless, he was greatly honored, when God said:

“ Let us make man in our image, after our likeness ; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowls of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth.” “ Behold I have given you every herb bearing seed, * * * and every tree in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed, to you it shall be for meat.” Truly a most gracious provision ! but it does not follow, that because God saw fit thus to care for and honor man ; that the earth was for his sole and exclusive benefit. We may well ask, amid the countless creatures called into being by His almighty fiat : “ What is man that Thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that Thou visitest him ? ”

In the heavenly vision, vouchsafed to St. John, this was the ascription of praise addressed to Him that sitteth on the throne. “ Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power—for Thou hast created all things and for Thy pleasure, they are and were created.” There is a grand truth embodied in these words, which unveils, if I may so say, incidentally one of the moving purposes of the creation. The universe was called into being, doubtless because the Allwise and the Almighty willed it. It were as idle as presumptuous, to question His purposes, or to attempt to solve the mysteries, which at any time and in any direction, call forth the exertion of His almighty power. But, in this divinely inspired ascription of praise, there is the recognition of the mysterious truth, that in the infinite variety of objects called into being by His almighty fiat He was pleased to consult His own pleasure and to find delight in the work of His own hand. And this thought, if I may so express it, brings us into reverent fellowship with the Deity. This world out of the myriad worlds was not alone for man. Ages upon ages it existed ; and the forests overspread the earth, and the fruits ripened, and animals roved at large, and the waters were alive with living creatures, myriads of years before man appeared. During these long periods of time, he who was created in the image of God, was as yet unborn. For whom then

was this display of the wisdom and goodness of God? Did the flowers smile and spread forth their varied tints of loveliness and beauty in vain? Did the birds chant their hymns of praise to the empty air? Was there no heart or mind in the universe to respond to the face of beauty and the voice of melody? "For Thy pleasure, they are and were created." At each epoch of the creation, God saw "that it was good," and in each and all, there was a complacent satisfaction ministering delight to the Divine Mind, in setting forth the Divine Glory. It has been fittingly observed by a late writer; "Beauty, essential beauty, belongs only to God." From this essential beauty of the Divine Nature have emanated all those forms, colors, combinations of light and shadow, which captivate the eye, and entrance the imagination; earth, air, the very caves bear witness to their essential beauty existing in the mind of the Creator and directing His works. In the words of the late Canon Kingsley. "He delights to employ His almighty power in producing ever fresh shapes of beauty, seemingly unnecessary, seemingly superfluous, seemingly created for the sake of their beauty alone — in order that the Lord may delight Himself in His works." Hence the apothegm, "A thing of beauty is a joy forever," may well apply to Him, of whose nature it forms an essential attribute; and in the exercise of which, there must ever be an unfailing source of delight. He needed not the expression of praise from the creatures of His own hand. Nor need it be a matter of surprise, that in the wide world through which man is scattered, there are unmeasured spaces and hidden regions, over which his feet have never trod, where the brightest flowers are blooming, the sweetest fruits are ripening, and Nature is clothed in her loveliest garb.

"Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear,
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen
And waste its sweetness on the desert air,"

But are they hid? Do they sparkle and blush unseen? There is ever an eye upon them that delights in their beauty—for, in the dark, unfathomed caves of ocean, or in the loneliness of the desert, each gem is as perfect in its conformation, each plant as complete in all the marvelous details of its growth, as when blooming on the cultivated parterre or glittering in the halls of fashion. God's workmanship is perfect in all its parts, and therein He teaches man a most important lesson.

It is said of the old architects, in planning their cathedrals, that they were as conscientious in devising and carrying out the details of their buildings, in the parts that were hidden from observation, as in the most prominent features of their work. And the reason assigned was, that the temple was built for the honor of God, and that no portion was hid from the All-seeing eye. The most trivial imperfection of the carving, the least want of honesty in the genuineness of the material, were open to the inspection of Him "with whom the darkness and light are both alike." And so, they were moved to build for the pleasure of God; and believed that the Great Architect would look with complacency upon their work.

Let me remark in conclusion—while I have ventured to argue that this beautiful world was not primarily or exclusively designed for man; yet, if we accept the teachings of the Word of Inspiration, we shall find throughout its every page, that God is a loving father, and that no created being is left without watchful care and bounteous provision. I believe, not only in an Almighty Creator, but in a special superintending providence; that the flower blooms where God has planted it; "God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body;" that the fruit ripens when and where He chooses; that there is no waste, and no lack on the earth's broad surface; nor can time or space exhaust the never-failing supply. In the truthful and poetic language of the one hundred and fourth Psalm: "He sendeth the springs

into the rivers, which run among the hills. All the beasts of the field drink thereof, and the wild asses quench their thirst. Beside them shall the fowls of the air have their habitation and sing among the branches. He bringeth forth grass for the cattle and green herbs for the service of man. That He may bring food out of the earth, and wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make him a cheerful countenance, and bread to strengthen man's heart. * * * Man goeth forth to his work, and to his labor until the evening."

By the law of man's being he is "to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow," — and yet, with lavish hand has the Bountiful Provider scattered His gifts. This beautiful world is ours; ours to enjoy and ours to improve, by all the lessons God is daily teaching; ministering to, and developing our complex nature in its present environment, and thus fitting us, through the tuition of the world that now is, for the higher state of existence when this corruption must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

"Then how should man rejoicing in his God
Delight in His perfections, shadowed forth
In every little flower and blade of grass!
Each opening bud, and care perfected seed
Is as a page, where we may read of God."